DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 375 955 PS 022 737

AUTHOR Dennison, Martha Jo S.
TITLE Providing Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum for Kindergarten-Age Girls in an Informal Education Setting.
PUB DATE 94
NOTE 67p.; Ed.D. Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Childhood Attitudes; Community Centers; *Curriculum Development; *Females; Inner City; *Kindergarten Children; Leadership Training; Primary Education; Program Effectiveness; Volunteers; *Volunteer Training; Youth Clubs
IDENTIFIERS Developmentally Appropriate Programs; *Girl Scouts of the USA

ABSTRACT

This practicum sought to provide a model for a local affiliate of the Girl Scouts of the USA, offering a developmentally appropriate curriculum for inner-city kindergarten-age girls at a community recreation center. A hands-on training program was developed and implemented with a group of community volunteers. Program activities were designed to allow girls to choose activities within the framework of the recreation center. Books, stories, songs, and games were used to teach the girls the abstract concepts behind the philosophy of the Girl Scouts organization. Interviews and questionnaires were used to assess the effectiveness of the program. The results of these assessments revealed that the program produced mixed results. Although the number of girls participating was not as high as expected, the data revealed that the seven girls who completed the program possessed a clear understanding of the philosophy of the Girl Scouts and were interested in continued involvement. However, frequent changes in volunteer leadership and ineffective coordination with the recreation center adversely affected the program. (Four appendixes contain the Girl Scout Promise and Law, a participant questionnaire, a participant interest survey form, and a weekly report form of meeting activities. Contains 53 references.) (MDM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

ED 375 955

Providing Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum for Kindergarten-Age Girls in an Informal Education Setting

by

Martha Jo S. Dennison

Cluster 43

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Martha Jo S. Dennison
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

A Practicum II Report presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

1994

PS 022737

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: Lynn Pace

Lynn Pace

Lynn Pace Field Executive

Title

Connecticut Trails Council of Girl Scouts

Waterbury Branch, Waterbury, Connecticut

Address

July 20, 1994
Date

This practicum report was submitted by Martha Jo S. Dennison under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed. D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

Approved:

August 11 1994
Date of Final Approval of Report

June S. Delano
June Delano, Ph.D., Adviser

June Delano

ABSTRACT

Providing Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum for Kindergarten-Age Girls in an Informal Education Setting. Dennison, Martha Jo S., 1994: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum/Early Childhood Education/Community Collaboration/ Training/Youth Programs

This practicum sought to provide a model for a local affiliate of a major organization serving girls, to offer developmentally appropriate curriculum in the inner-city in a long-term program. Previous efforts had only been short-term and provided by paid staff. This project attempted to use volunteers from the community to deliver the program.

The writer provided hands-on training to several volunteers who included a young adult, a senior citizen, and teenagers at an inner-city recreation center. Program activities were designed to girls to choose activities within the framework of the writer's organization. Books, stories, songs, and games were used to teach girls the abstract concepts behind the philosophy of the organization.

An analysis of the results indicated mixed results. While the number of girls participating was not as high as the writer expected, the data revealed that these girls had a clear understanding of the concepts and were interested in continuing with the program. Frequent changes in leadership affected program delivery, indicating that long-term commitments by volunteers in this setting may have been too much to expect. The collaboration with the recreation center also had an effect on program delivery, leading to the conclusion that a stronger collaborative plan was necessary.

****

Permission Statement

As a student in the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies, I do (✓) do not ( ) give permission to Nova University to distribute copies of this practicum report on request from interested individuals. It is my understanding that Nova University will not charge for this dissemination except to cover the costs of microfiching, handling, and mailing of the materials.

August 17, 1994 (date)

Martha Jo S. Dennison (signature)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to thank Lynn Pace, without whom this project would not have been possible; the leaders who so enthusiastically participated; and of course, the girls, who made it all worthwhile.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iii

TABLE OF CONTENTS iv

LIST OF TABLES v

Chapter

I INTRODUCTION 1

Description of the Work Setting. 1

The Role of the Writer 2

II PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION 4

Problem Description. 4

Problem Documentation. 5

Causative Analysis 8

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature 9

III ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS 16

Goals and Expectations. 16

Expected Outcomes 16

Measurement of Outcomes 17

IV SOLUTION STRATEGY 19

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions. . . . 19

Description of Selected Solution. 21

Report of Action Taken. 24

V RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS 32
Results. 33
Discussion 35
Recommendations. 41
Dissemination. 41
REFERENCES 42
Appendices
A THE GIRL SCOUT PROMISE AND LAW
ORIGINAL AND SIMPLIFIED VERSIONS. 50
B QUESTIONNAIRE OF GIRL SCOUT PROMISE AND LAW . . 53
C INTEREST SURVEY FORM. 56
D WEEKLY REPORT FORM FOR MEETING ACTIVITIES . . . 58

LIST OF TABLES

Table
1 Participation in Calendar Year 1992. 6
2 Participation in Calendar Year 1993. 7
3 Comparison of Girls Making Correct Responses
at Midpoint and Completion of Project 34
4 Roster of Leaders and Time Spent
in Project. 34

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of the Setting

The writer works in the membership and program group for the national headquarters of an informal education, non-profit organization, the largest in the country that serves girls. The writer also volunteers in the local affiliate of this organization. The local council, located in a northeastern state, covers a territory that includes rural, urban, and suburban communities, and provides program for girls ages 5-17, from all cultures, races, and socioeconomic groups.

The setting for the project was an urban community of approximately 120,000. The economy in this city has declined in recent years due to the loss of several manufacturing companies. As a result, there has been a

loss in the tax base, and thus services, as has been true in other cities in the region. The inner-city area has been plagued by a rise in the crime rate, with drugs, gangs, and prostitution common. There is a recreation center that serves all ages within this area, only blocks from one of the highest areas for crime. It was here that the writer focused efforts in a program for young children.

The neighborhood surrounding the recreation center is populated mostly by African-Americans, some in single family dwellings and some in housing projects. The children in these families make up the bulk of the participants in the activities at the center. There are, however, a number of senior citizens who attend activities at the center who are white. Some Hispanic families also live in the area. The staff at the recreation center have tried to encourage activities that promote participation across racial and ethnic lines, but success has been limited.

The Role of the Writer

The writer serves as a consultant in child development to the council. This has usually consisted of periodic training in age level program activities or

disability awareness. In the past, the writer developed a number of resources appropriate for use with kindergarten-age children. This led to an expanded role in assisting the council in working with girls and the adults who lead them.

Chapter II

PROBLEM

Problem Description

The writer noted a problem surrounding participation of girls at the youngest age level (five and six year olds). There has always been a basic requirement of membership that girls accept certain fundamental principles, even though they are abstract concepts. Activities should be based on the needs and interests of girls, but leaders have usually decided on the activities. In addition, past efforts at providing a consistent, year-round program for young girls in the inner city were limited. Therefore, Girl Scouts, ages 5-6, were unable to understand Girl Scout concepts and enjoy Girl Scouting.

Problem Documentation

Evidence of the problem was supported by published material, membership statistics and informal surveys. The Girl Scout Promise and Law, printed in all publications for girls and leaders, were stated in abstract terms too difficult for girls this age to really understand (see Appendix A for official text of Girl Scout Promise and Law). However, membership is contingent upon each girl's acceptance of these concepts.

Membership as a Girl Scout is granted to any girl who:

- has made the Girl Scout Promise and accepted the Girl Scout Law;
- has paid annual membership dues;
- meets applicable membership standards

(Girl Scouts of the United States of America, 1993a).

The organization, both nationally and locally, depends heavily on adult volunteers to provide program activities for girls. However, in an informal survey of local field executives, the writer found that in the three inner city areas served by the council, almost

all programs were provided by paid staff because they were not able to get parents and others in the community involved as program leaders. These paid staff usually ran a series of short-term programs (usually six weeks or less) so that they could reach a greater number of girls. Thus, girls who might not otherwise have participated were able to enjoy good activities for a while, but few were able to participate in a consistent, on-going program.

In the city where the writer serves as a consultant, a total of 278 kindergarten-age girls participated in all programs offered in 1992. The numbers in Table 1 show the breakdown of participation.

Table 1

Participation in Calendar Year 1992

Year round	
Total city	131
Inner city	55
Short Term	
Total city	147
Inner city	129
Total city participation	278

In calendar 1993, 251 girls participated in activities throughout the city (excluding summer programs). Table 2 shows the participation figures.

Table 2

Participation in Calendar Year 1993

Year round	
Total city	136
Inner city	70
Short term	
Total city	115
Inner city	114
Total city participation	251

It was evident from the figures of the last two years that most girls at the kindergarten-age level participated in short term programs, particularly in the inner-city area. This meant that the girls who were most likely face the social problems in this inner city area and who could have benefited from a

structured program experience were least likely to get it.

Causative Analysis

The writer identified several causes that contributed to the problem. In the past, most girls in the inner-city area participated in short-term programs and therefore did not receive the benefits of consistency and progression that a long-term program could offer. In addition, leaders for girls this age usually have been novices at the position, and often unfamiliar with what is considered developmentally appropriate practice. Training for leaders at the local level frequently involved how to handle the business aspects, such as filling out forms, and often neglected program issues, particularly as they pertain to developmental needs for each age level. In fact, the council recently phased out the basic training in program and child development for this age level. Training sessions traditionally have been held in central council locations or rural campsites, making it difficult for those with transportation and child care concerns to attend.

The field executive for this particular community stated that parents in the economically depressed inner-city have historically had more immediate needs, such as food and shelter, and have not been available for participation in activities for their children. The director of the inner-city community center, one of the sites where girls have been served short-term, stated that she had to turn away 10-15 kindergarten-age girls in her 1992 summer program because there was no one qualified to work with this age group. In addition, several political corruption indictments in 1993 led to a freeze in spending, affecting programs city-wide.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Many experts have written about the problem of an inappropriate curriculum. In a preliminary literature review, several observations related to this issue. Elkind (1987), and Peck, McCaig, & Sapp (1988) explained that children of kindergarten age do not think like older children and therefore should not participate in the same kinds of activities expected of other age levels. In addition, adults may not have

attended to or even understood the unique learning styles and abilities of young children in determining the types of activities in which they participate (Bredekamp, 1987; Moses-Zirkes, 1992). This has often led to program activities based on the goals of adults, rather than the needs and interests of children (Bredekamp, 1987; Kagan, 1991).

Other literature also documented the problem. Moses-Zirkes (1992), Schweinhart (1988), and Vann (1991) maintained that the lack of a developmentally appropriate curriculum can lead to an experience that may be unsatisfactory. Greenberg (1990) and Hymes (1981) pointed out that the kindergarten year may be the most important year in a child's life, in that children must develop a love for learning, curiosity of their environment, and how to work with others, concepts that can be lost with an inappropriate curriculum. In addition, a program that incorporates progression in activities allows children to build on previously learned skills as they grow older. There is no need for five-and-six-year-olds to know everything they will need to know when they are older.

Adult-directed activities were criticized by several authors. Many times adults lead children in an

activity simply because they can do it or seem to enjoy it. The value of an activity should not be based on whether or not children can do it, since they frequently try to please adults, but rather on what is best for their development in the long run (Greenberg, 1990; Katz, 1987; Katz, 1988). Also, adult-directed learning seldom achieves intended goals, while child-centered, experiential learning is consistent with independence and self-reliance, characteristics valued by our society. (National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC] & National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education [NAECS/SDE], 1991; Schweinhart, 1988).

Many authors cited this lack of knowledge about child development as problematic in curriculum planning. When curriculum development has not been based on current theory and practice about how children develop, but instead planned around some arbitrarily established criteria, attention may not have been given to individual needs in relation to program goals (Bredekamp, 1987; Kagan, 1991; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991; Schweinhart, 1988). In addition, curriculum based on what children can't do, rather than what they can, and

using what they know in a meaningful context, was presented as inappropriate (Hymes, 1981; Greenberg, 1990; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991; Schweinhart, 1988). Any program strictly reflecting adult planning, instead of allowing children to see themselves and their ideas in the activities, was also criticized (Casey & Lippman, 1991; Hymes, 1981).

A number of authors referred to a specific body of knowledge about how children this age learn, even though it has not always been taken into consideration in program development. Five-year-olds think in concrete terms. They confuse fantasy and reality, and do not understand permanent properties of objects when something is changed (Seefeldt, 1989). They are just entering into an age of intuitive thought, where they begin to move from a dependence on how things look (perception), to an ability to see more than one factor at a time (logic) (Piaget, 1950). Children this age do not yet understand abstract concepts, but learn best when they are actively engaged in their environments with real objects (Elkind, 1986; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Katz, 1992; Seefeldt, 1989). This means they learn best by experience and example, not instruction or drill (Katz, 1987, 1988; Piaget & Inhelder, 1969).

Play, in particular, allows children to understand their world(Erikson, 1977; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989). Activities such as dramatic play, stories, arts and crafts, and particularly cooperative activities help children discover who they are in relation to the world and to each other (Dyson, 1990; Elkind, 1987; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Katz, 1988; Katz & Chard, 1989; Seefeldt, 1989). In the writer's organization, extrinsic rewards, called "recognitions," have traditionally been given to girls at older age levels upon completion of particular activities. It has been difficult to convince the adults (including many parents) who work with kindergarten-age girls that such rewards are not appropriate for this age group. Research has shown that when children are given extrinsic rewards for activities in which they are interested, they eventually lose interest, and may ultimately experience "burnout" (Katz, 1988).

Several causes for the problem were revealed in the literature. Too often, American standards for educational practice have been determined by political, economic, and social considerations rather than by what is known to be good pedagogy for children (Elkind, 1986). Frequently, concerned adults have applied adult

standards of learning to early childhood programs and emphasize activities that are developmentally inappropriate for young children (Bredekamp, 1987; Cassidy, Myers, & Benion, 1987; Day, 1991; Elkind, 1987; Hymes, 1981). Parents and those who work with children at older age levels have often expected children to achieve certain goals or reach some established criteria to prepare them for later work (Elkind, 1987). In fact, young children learn in a different manner from older children and adults, and to assume their learning abilities are comparable to older children and that they can use the same materials and procedures ignores this reality (Elkind, 1987; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE; 1991; Seefeldt, 1989). Many adults have also been under the false impression that children's exposure to modern technology makes them brighter and more sophisticated, and thus able to handle activities intended for older children, when what technology really does is strengthen their potential (Elkind, 1986; Seefeldt, 1989).

There needs to be an understanding that one program delivery system and structure do not fit in all situations. Activities for girls and support systems for adults must be meaningful and effectively delivered

to the population group being served (Girl Scouts of the United States of America, 1993b). Likewise, when activity leaders are not held responsible, the program suffers (Spann, 1992).

Several topic areas were researched, including early childhood education, child development, curriculum development, kindergarten activities, developmentally appropriate practice, adult training, and psychology.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The following goals and outcomes were projected for this practicum: Kindergarten age girls should be able to participate in a program that meets their needs. The goal of the writer is that Girl Scouts, ages 5-6, will be able to understand Girl Scout concepts and enjoy Girl Scouting.

Expected Outcomes

The writer established three outcomes that would occur as a result of this practicum: First, at least ten kindergarten-age girls will be able to understand the concepts in a simplified version of the Girl Scout

Promise and Law (see Appendix A for simplified version). Second, an on-going program in an inner-city area will be led by a team of two or more volunteers, rather than any paid staff. And third, at least ten kindergarten-age girls will indicate intent to continue to the next program age level.

Measurement of Outcomes

To measure the effectiveness of the project's implementation, the writer developed evaluation procedures specific to the setting. For the first outcome, a questionnaire was designed that leaders could easily administer (see Appendix B for list of questions). For the writer's record keeping, this was a written form, but leaders were allowed to be flexible in its administration (see Appendix B for full instructions). The writer developed this questionnaire because it asked questions specifically pertaining to the Girl Scout Promise and Law (see Appendix A for original and simplified versions of the Girl Scout Promise and Law). The wording of each question was considered carefully to allow leaders to elicit specific information at a level easily understood by

girls. Two administrations, one near the midpoint of the project, and another near the end, were planned so that girls' progress in learning the concepts could be determined.

After girls entered the program, the number of volunteer leaders needed was determined. When the leadership team was in place, a roster of names was developed to indicate that the outcome was met. Since the national organization has specific guidelines on adult/child ratios, the roster helped ensure ratios were met. It was also planned for use by the recreation center staff to use to refer any questions about the program to appropriate personnel.

To verify the third outcome, an interest survey was given to girls near the end of the implementation schedule (see Appendix C for survey form). The writer felt that the age of the girls warranted a simple method of determining interest. This form was designed so that it could be administered in a matter of minutes by either a leader or parent.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The writer noted a problem surrounding participation of girls at the youngest age level (five and six year olds). There has always been a basic requirement of membership that girls accept certain fundamental principles, even though they are abstract concepts. Activities are supposed to be based on the needs and interests of girls, but leaders have usually decided on the activities. In addition, past efforts at providing a consistent, year-round program for young girls in the inner city have been limited. Therefore, Girl Scouts, ages 5-6, were unable to understand Girl Scout concepts and enjoy Girl Scouting.

The literature offered several solutions to problems delivering appropriate curriculum to

kindergarten age children. The preschool and kindergarten years were described as the best time to help children develop positive social skills and group identity as part of their personality development (Katz & McClellan, 1991; Erikson, 1977). Allowing children to plan and choose their own activities was seen as integral to the learning experience (Casey & Lippman, 1991; Cassidy, Myers, & Benion, 1987; Dennison & Sparks, 1993). Hands-on activities were preferred for giving children the opportunity to manipulate objects and explore their environments (Elkind, 1987; Greenberg, 1990; Hymes, 1981; Katz, 1987, 1988; Seefeldt, 1989). For example, Dennison (1993), Kantrowitz and Wingert (1989), and Katz (1988) felt that children should be working on projects, experimenting and playing, dictating and writing stories, reading real books, and creating their own artwork, rather than using adult-designed models. Activities such as poetry were shown to help children develop memorization skills, play with words in the world around them, and develop feelings of self confidence as they learn factual information along with social issues (Andrews, 1988; Glazer & Lamme, 1990; Erikson, 1950). In the writer's organization, girls at

older age levels have always had their own book, called a handbook, that uses activities such as stories, songs, games, diagrams, and role-play to present information . Many adults requested such a book for kindergarten-age girls, more in the form of a workbook or coloring book. Often, adults think workbooks are a good idea for children to learn skills, but this format has been shown to be inappropriate, since it contradicts children's developmental characteristics by presenting a menu rather than a framework. Workbooks also ignore individual differences (Elkind, 1987; Hymes, 1981; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Marzollo, 1988; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991). Some authors felt that, rather than workbooks, children should be working on a collection of activities, more in the style of a portfolio or activity book that allows them to include artwork, writing, and other interests with a minimum of adult influence (Meisels & Steele, 1992; Peck, McCaig & Sapp, 1988; Spiegel, 1991).

Description of Selected Solution

After reviewing solutions offered in the

literature, the writer came to understand the importance of providing leaders with more guidance on what constitutes appropriate activities for kindergarten age children. It was apparent that program activities need to account for the lack of expertise of the typical leader, while reflecting what is known to be sound developmental practice (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991; Schweinhart, 1988). Council support was seen as critical in helping leaders deliver the program more easily.

To meet the needs of all concerned, the writer developed activities for a group of kindergarten-age girls while training those who worked with them to use developmentally appropriate practice. This approach was effective because it allowed girls to initiate their own activities while providing more support to the leaders who work with them (Casey & Lippman, 1991; Cassidy, Myers, & Benin, 1987). The local council was supportive of the writer's efforts. The project was facilitated through the use of an inner-city recreation center site where the writer was able to develop program activities. The director of the center expressed support of the project. The writer worked with one inner-city teenager hired by the city, as well

as other teenage girls hired by the local council and adult volunteers as trainees in developmentally appropriate practice.

The writer proposed several steps in implementing the solution. First, to meet the needs expressed in research and in council goals, the writer implemented recently developed resources for girls and adults in an introductory program at the recreation center. These resources provided the framework for the kinds of activities children this age enjoy, such as working on projects, dictating stories, creating their own artwork (Dennison, 1993; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1989; Katz, 1988), learning poetry, and developing feelings of self-confidence (Andrews, 1988; Glazer & Lamme, 1990; Erikson, 1950). As part of the program, the writer trained adults and teenagers from low-income areas in the use of developmentally appropriate activities for kindergarten-age girls. After guiding these adults and teenagers into their own leadership roles, the writer assumed more of the role of consultant. The adults and teenagers took over the primary leadership of these girls' activities. Contact continued through weekly report forms submitted by the leaders to the writer (see Appendix D for complete form). The writer

continued with site visits, and also planned initiatives for contacting potential sponsors, acquiring supplies, and fostering relationships with parents.

Report of Action Taken

Throughout the project, the writer attempted to deliver developmentally appropriate meeting activities in an on-going program for girls who otherwise would not have such an opportunity. Before meetings, the writer placed on tables such items as books, puppets, clay, or puzzles for girls to enjoy until everyone had arrived. Each meeting lasted about two hours and began with an opening ceremony, usually The Pledge of Allegiance and a song. A Kaper Chart, or job chart, was used to help girls in selecting activities they would lead. These included responsibilities such as line leader, snack helper, game leader, closing ceremony leader, and clean-up helpers. Typical program activities included one quiet activity, such as arts and crafts or making snack, and an active game. During the meetings, the writer or one of the other leaders read the big book version of Who is a Daisy Girl Scout?

to help girls learn a simplified version of the Girl Scout Promise and Law (see Appendix A for simplified version). The leader and girls would discuss the story and illustrations to review the concepts. Occasionally, parents would drop in and were encouraged to participate in activities with their daughters.

For the first month, the writer began the program by working with a group who met at the recreation center one day a week. Assisting in the beginning were two teenagers, one employed by the city and one by the local council. The teenagers were responsible for planning the games and closing ceremonies with the girls each week.

After several weeks, the teenager employed by the council felt ready to take over the responsibility of leadership. She showed excellent leadership skills and initiative, and had good rapport with the girls. Since organizational standards require adult leadership for any group under age eighteen, the writer helped her decide on an adult who would be willing to participate. She finally decided to ask one of the senior citizens who met for Bingo at the same time as the girls' meeting. This woman had expressed a great deal of interest in the activities the girls were doing and

seemed a likely candidate. She readily accepted and the next phase of the project was in place. Unfortunately, the worst winter in over a decade led to the cancellation of some meetings. Attendance also dropped off at this time. The new leaders were anxious over their responsibilities, so through consensus, the decision was made to hold the girls' meetings every other week, instead of weekly. This seemed easiest for the leaders and fit better with the schedule at the recreation center. Notices were sent home to parents reminding them of meetings and activities.

Often, the group was larger than anticipated and included girls up to the age of seven, as well as some boys. These children were taken into the group because they were otherwise unsupervised. Some were dropped off without any adults checking them in; others were simply too young for the activities planned at the recreation center. The writer felt that even though the project was designed for five and six-year-old girls, the first obligation was to the safety and needs of any children in the building. Some adaptations to the activities were made; however the basic structure remained the same. Some girls even began using the

story book to teach the concepts of the Girl Scout Promise and Law to the boys.

During this time, the second and third months, the writer began to step back from a leadership role and began collecting supplies from home, parents, schools, and any other available donors so that the girls and leaders would have necessary materials for activities. The recreation center director was unable to provide any resources for the girls. The writer also began to develop materials to be used for public relations within the community, such as posters and fliers. Each week, one of the leaders completed the Weekly Report Form for meeting Activities (see Appendix D for complete form), and submitted it to the writer. The writer was in contact with the leaders weekly, either in person or by phone, to offer support and suggestions as needed.

Unfortunately, in the third month, the teenager hired by the council had to drop out of the project due to family problems. At almost the same time, the young woman hired by the city decided to quit to concentrate on her school work. The older woman who was involved was not comfortable in planning and leading activities, so she decided to wait until other leaders could be

found before continuing her participation. Thus, the writer once again began to lead activities. The council provided another teenager to help, but this young woman stated from the beginning that she was only interested in working short-term.

By the fourth month, the writer had been referred to a woman in the community who was interested in becoming a leader. This woman was a volunteer parent with Head Start and had a good understanding of kindergarten-age children. Her own daughter, who was about seven, participated with another group affiliated with the writer's organization, so she already had a positive image of the group and was aware of what was involved in leadership. She was able to jump in with a minimum of direction from the writer.

Almost immediately, she experienced some roadblocks from the council. She wasn't allowed to undertake certain responsibilities, like taking girls on field trips, without basic leader training, but when she tried to sign up for courses she was told most of them were full. The trainings were offered only at a location some distance from her home, making transportation and child care difficult. The writer decided to supplement the weekly hands-on experiences

with videos and leader resource publications developed by the national organization pertaining to its philosophy, requirements, and program so that the leader would still get this information, even without formal training.

This leaders' enthusiasm was high, and her ideas and instincts for this age group were excellent, although she tended to rely on arts and crafts in the beginning. She was introduced to the senior citizen who had been involved earlier, and plans were made to work together. Meanwhile, the writer worked with the council to make sure that she was "officially trained." The Field Executive arranged transportation to another town for basic leader training one evening each week during the fifth month. Upon completion of this series, the leader was recognized by the council and received a certificate.

During the sixth month, this leader began having the first of several family crises that impeded her participation. Besides her children, she also financially supported her mother and boyfriend. Her plans to further her education began to revolve around what she could do to financially support a family of six. She had wanted to pursue Early Childhood

Education, but was discouraged by her public assistance counselor from doing so. It was suggested she try something that would ensure a higher income. The writer began looking into scholarship possibilities for her, but she eventually decided to move to another state where other family members live. She met a final time with the girls and was presented with a gift by the writer.

Throughout these stops and starts with so many leaders, the writer was still able to ensure that at least some girls remained interested in the activities, although the group had dwindled to a core group of seven girls. The seventh month was the last of the school year, and activities were planned that provided closure, as well as prepared girls for the possibilities at the next age level. A farewell party, with parents invited, was held for the final meeting.

During the eighth month, the writer met with the Field Executive and the director of the recreation center to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the project. The writer also met with the supervisor of the Field Executive, as well as some long-time volunteers, to discuss the project. The writer

presented the project, and made plans to follow-up with information included in this report.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The writer noted a problem surrounding participation of girls at the youngest age level (five and six year olds). There has always been a basic requirement of membership that girls accept certain fundamental principles, even though they are abstract concepts. Activities should be based on the needs and interests of girls, but leaders have usually decided on the activities. In addition, past efforts at providing a consistent, year-round program for young girls in the inner city were limited. The writer felt that by working with leaders who were themselves from the community, a sound program could be developed. By showing the leaders ways to provide program activities in a developmentally appropriate manner, the writer was

able to facilitate the implementation of a long-term program in an area where such had not happened before.

Results

The writer developed methods for determining results for the project. Three outcomes were established to present the results. The first outcome stated that at least ten girls in the program will be able to understand the concepts in a simplified version of the Girl Scout Promise and Law (see Appendix A for original and simplified versions of the Girl Scout Promise and Law). This numerical outcome was not met, since fewer than ten girls were in the program at that point. However, a questionnaire administered at the midpoint and the conclusion of the project shows that the girls who were in the program were able to answer at least ten questions correctly, and thus understood the concepts (see Appendix B for list of questions). Table 3 compares girls' understanding of concepts at the midpoint and conclusion of the project.

Table 3

Comparison of Girls Making Correct Responses at Midpoint and Completion of Project

	Midpoint	Completion
Girls in Program	9	7
Correct Responses	2	7

The second outcome stated that an ongoing program in an inner-city area will be led by a team of two or more volunteers, rather than any paid staff. This outcome was met, though not in the manner the writer had anticipated, since no one leader participated the entire time. Table 4 lists the roster of leaders and the length of time they participated.

Table 4

Roster of Leaders and Time Spent in Project

L.B	Adult	3 months
M.B.	Adult	2 months
B.H.	Youth	3 months
S.P.	Youth	3 months
M.S.	Youth	3 months

The third outcome, that at least ten kindergarten-age girls will indicate intent to continue to the next program age level, was also not met numerically, since only seven were still participating at the end of the year. All seven girls, however, indicated an interest in moving to the next age level in their responses to an Interest Survey Form (see Appendix C for survey form). In fact, two girls have already been placed in existing troops.

Discussion

The mixed results of this project and the possible causes of unmet outcomes led the writer to examine the planning, design, and implementation of the project. The first outcome, that at least ten girls would be able to understand the concepts in a simplified version of the Girl Scout Promise and Law (see Appendix A for simplified version) was a reasonable expectation given the length of time of the project and the anticipation that more than ten girls would participate. The report from the director of the recreation center that in the past she had had to turn away ten to fifteen girls in

this age group led the writer to believe that at least that many girls were available. There are two obvious reasons the numerical outcome may not have been met: 1) the frequent change in leadership may have led to less cohesion of the group, less of a sense of "belonging"; and 2) the severe weather early in the project interfered with meeting times, which in turn may have confused girls and parents about continued attendance. Other factors may certainly have entered into the loss of girls from the program. Starting the project sooner might have pulled more girls in in the beginning, although it is not unusual in the writer's organization for girls of this age to begin the program well into the school year. Perhaps in this setting an earlier start would have fostered a routine for participants. The Field Executive had told the writer that previous attempts at establishing long-term programs were difficult because families have more immediate survival needs to consider. Gretz (1993) has said that taking care of these basic survival needs takes priority over seeing that children participate in activities. It is important to note, however, that the girls who remained in the program until its completion were able to understand the concepts as presented,

indicating that the methods of presentation were indeed sound.

The second outcome, that at least two or more volunteers would lead an on-going program, was achieved, though not as the writer envisioned. While five leaders participated in the project at one time or another, no one leader was involved from start to finish, other than the writer. The foundation for establishing a volunteer base in the inner-city area was and still is important in developing a youth program such as this one. Children who grow up in what are sometimes called "at-risk" environments can benefit from the support of compensatory adults (Craven, 1990; Linquanti, 1992). Volunteerism is an excellent way to establish connections within a community. However, recognition of the diversity of volunteers and their needs for diverse volunteer opportunities is important (McCurley, 1993; Taylor, 1992; Zeldin & Tarlov, 1993). The writer attempted to facilitate the process for leaders through modeling and mentoring in the use of developmentally appropriate curriculum. "On-the-job" training was seen as one way of providing this support, since most adults are unable to provide such a

curriculum without appropriate training (Hart, 1992; White-Ciraco, 1993; Zeldin & Tarlov, 1993).

The numerical measurement for the third outcome was probably not achieved for the same reasons that the first was not. The fact that the girls who participated until the end of the project were all interested in moving to the next level shows that a developmentally appropriate curriculum, even when delivered by non-professionals, meets the needs and interests of young children in informal settings.

Perhaps a stronger collaboration in the beginning, with a well-developed plan, would have ensured stronger follow-through and results. The recreation center provided the site, but all other aspects of the project, such as leadership, materials, training, and financial commitments were the responsibility for the writer, with some support from the parents and the council. The writer and other leaders were often not informed when off-site activities had been planned. This meant no other adults were around to supervise children who were not a part of this project but had been dropped off at the center. While the leaders in this project tried to be flexible, the shift to accommodate boys, as well as girls older than the

target age group, was obviously frustrating. Often, collaborations fall short of their expected goals because the participating groups are not clear on their responsibilities and the support each is to bring to the project. A definite, written plan is necessary from the beginning(Melaville, Blank, & Asayesh; National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations, 1993; SERVE: SouthEast Regional Vision for Collaboration, 1993; White & Wehlage, 1994). This does not mean, however, that plans are inflexible. On-going evaluation is necessary to see a collaboration as a process, with growth and change a part of any plan (Melaville, Blank, & Asayesh, 1993). At the same time, it may be necessary to plan for more short-term commitments from volunteers from the beginning (Taylor, 1993).

Even though the results were not as anticipated, the writer has concluded that this model has the potential to be successful because it:

- Uses available community resources.
- Facilitates the delivery of needed services acting as a referral source able to do the necessary follow-up.

- Recruits and uses community volunteers through active outreach and provides them with a comfortable structure and a rewarding experience.

(Hispanic American Career Educational Resources, Inc. [HACER], 1992, p. 4).

The model likewise applied other characteristics of successful collaborations in that it allowed youth to take on leadership roles (National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations, 1993) while it offered older people meaningful participation within the community (Struntz & Reville, 1985). In addition, the model provided methods for gaining community ownership, developing and using people's strengths, and actively engaging children (Linquanti, 1992; White & Wehlage, 1994). A well-written plan, defining the roles and commitments of each person and organization involved, should probably have been developed well before any girls were admitted to the program. This would have defined the expectations and limitations of each individual and group. Development from the top down, meaning that adults were in place before the girls began, might have counteracted the frequent changes in leadership by

anticipating them. Future projects should consider short-term assignments for leaders.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested concerning the project:

1. Develop a written plan for any collaboration that defines and delineates the roles of all involved.
2. Offer options to leaders other than long-term obligations, so that they can make commitments they can manage easily and still feel a sense of accomplishment.

Dissemination

The premise of this projects has been shared with several colleagues, as well as council staff. The writer has identified strengths and weaknesses of the project, and hopes to refine the model for replication. The Field Executive in the council is hoping to be a part of a grant funded project involving teaching leadership skills to substance abusing mothers, and has asked the writer to be a part of the project if it is implemented.

References

Andrews, J. H. (1988). Poetry: Tool of the classroom magician. Young Children, 43, 4, 17-25.

Bredekamp, S. (1987). Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8 (exp. ed.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Casey, M. B. & Lippman, M. (1991). Learning to plan through play. Young Children, 46, 4, 52-58.

Cassidy, D. J., Myers, B. K., & Benion, P. E. (1987). Early childhood planning: A developmental perspective. Childhood Education, 64, 1, 2-8.

Craven, D. (1990, Summer). The need for supportive adults in a child's life. Girl Scout Leader, p. 21.

Day, B. (1991). Excellence in early childhood education: A call for leadership. In Designing a developmental program for four-to-six-year-olds. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Dennison, M. J. (1993, Fall). Custom-made for five-year-olds. Girl Scout Leader, p. 19.

Dennison, M. J. (1993). Who is a Daisy Girl Scout? New York: Girl Scouts of the U. S. A.

Dennison, M. J. & Sparks, K. U. (1993, Fall). New adventures for Daisy and Brownie Girl Scouts. Girl Scout Leader, pp. 15-18.

Dyson, A. H. (1990). Symbol makers, symbol weavers: How children link play, pictures, and print. Young Children, 45, 2, 50-57.

Elkind, D. (1986). Formal education and early childhood education: An essential difference. Phi Delta Kappan, 67, 9, 631-636.

Elkind, D. (9187). Miseducation: Preschoolers at risk. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Erikson, E. (1950). Childhood and society. New York: Norton.

Erikson, E. (1977). Toys and reasons. New York: Norton.

Girl Scouts of the United States of America. (1991a). Blue book of basic documents. New York: Author.

Girl Scouts of the United States of America. (1991b). [Survey of Daisy/Brownie Girl Scouts and their leaders]. Unpublished raw data.

Girl Scouts of the United States of America. (1993a, February). Management Report of the National Executive Director to the National Board of Directors.

Girl Scouts of the United States of America. (1993b). Spotlight on success: Serving the Mexican-American community. New York: Author.

Glazer, J. I., & Lamme, L. L. (1990). Poem picture books and their uses in the classroom. The Reading Teacher, 44, 2, 102-109.

Greenberg, P. (1990). Why not academic preschool? (Part 1), Young Children, 45, 2, 70-80.

Gretz, R. (1993, Fall). Carnegie report strikes a chord. American Humanics, pp. 3-4.

Hart, R. (1992). Children's participation: From tokenism to citizenship. Florence, Italy: UNICEF.

Hispanic American Career Educational Resources, Inc. (1992). Las Madrinas/Los Padrinos mentoring program guidelines. New York: Author.

Hymes, J. (1981). Teaching the child under six (3rd ed.). Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill.

Kagan, S. L. (1991). A profession growing up: Painting our think. In C. Copple (Ed.). Quality matters: Improving the professional development of the early childhood workforce (pp. 17-27). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Kantrowitz, B., & Wingert, P. (1989, April). How kids learn. Newsweek, pp. 50-56.

Katz, L. G. (1987). What should young children be learning? ERIC Digest. Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

Katz, L. G. (1988). What should young children be doing? American Educator: The Professional Journal of the American Federation of Teachers, 12, 2, 28-33, 44-45.

Katz, L. G. (1992). Readiness: Children and their schools. The ERIC Review, 2, 1, 2-6.

Katz, L. G. & Chard, S. C. (1989). Engaging children's minds: The project approach. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Katz, L. G. & McClellan, D. (1991). The teacher's role in the development of young children (ED 331 642). Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

Linquanti, R. (1992). Using community-wide collaboration to foster resiliency in kids: A conceptual framework. Portland, OR: Western Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities.

Marzollo, J. (1988). Do worksheets work? Parents' Magazine, pp. 108-112.

McCurley, S. (1993, October-December). Positioning your volunteer program for the 21st century. Leadership, pp. 6-8.

Meisels, S. J. & Steele, D. M. (1992). The early childhood portfolio collection process. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Human Growth and Development.

Melaville, A. I., Blank, M. J., & Asayesh, C. (1993). Together we can. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

Moses-Zirkes, S. (1992, October). Path to kindergarten can be treacherous. APA Monitor, p. 52.

National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations. (1993). The community collaboration manual. Washington, D. C.: Author.

National Association for the Education of Young Children & National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. (1991). Guidelines for appropriate curriculum content and assessment in programs serving children ages 3 through 8. Young Children, 46, 3, 21-38.

Peck, J. T., McCaig, G., & Sapp, M. E. (1988). Kindergarten policies: What is best for children? Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Piaget, J. (1950). The psychology of intelligence. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Piaget, J. & Inhelder, B. (1969). The psychology of the child. New York: Basic Books.

Schweinhart, L. J. (1988). How important is child-initiated activity? Principal, 67, 5, 6-10.

Seefeldt, Carol. (1989). How good is your kindergarten curriculum? Principal, 68, 5, 11-15.

SERVE: SouthEast Regional Vision for Education. (1993). Leadership for collaboration: Participant's workbook. Greensboro: University of North Carolina School of Education.

Spann, M. (1992, Winter). Volunteers who give their best. Girl Scout Leader, p. 14.

Spiegel, D. L. (1991). Children's activity books. The Reading Teacher, 44, 8, 594-596.

Struntz, K. A. & Reville, S. (1985). Growing together: An intergenerational sourcebook. Washington, D. C.: American Association of Retired Persons.

Taylor, M. E. (1992, August). Demographics and motivations of volunteers: Implications for effective volunteer management. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Society of Association Executives National Conference.

Vann, A. S. (1991). Let's not push our kindergarten children. Principal, 70, 5, 27-28.

White, J. A. & Wehlage, G. (1994). Community collaboration: If it is such a good idea, why is it so hard to do? Madison, WI: Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools.

White-Ciraco, C. (1993). Training adults working with girls (ages 5-11) in an informal education program. Unpublished practicum report, Nova University, Ft. Lauderdale, FL.

Zeldin, S. & Tarlov, S. (1993). Enhancing the professional development of youth workers: Recommendations from the field. Washington, D. C.: Academy for Educational Development, Center for Youth Development and Policy Research.

APPENDIX A

THE GIRL SCOUT PROMISE AND LAW

ORIGINAL AND SIMPLIFIED VERSIONS

THE GIRL SCOUT PROMISE

On my honor, I will try;
To serve God and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

THE GIRL SCOUT LAW

I will do my best:
to be honest
to be fair
to help where I am needed
to be cheerful
to be friendly and considerate
to be a sister to every Girl Scout
to respect authority
to use resources wisely
to protect and improve the world around me
to show respect for myself and others through
my words and actions

WHO IS A DAISY GIRL SCOUT?

Who is that girl they're all talking about?
Why, don't you know?
She's a Daisy Girl Scout.
That Daisy is honest--she knows what is true.
She tries to be fair when she's playing with you.
She helps where she's needed-she'll get the job done.
She's happy and cheerful to everyone.
She's friendly and kind whenever she's out,
and acts like a sister to every Girl Scout.
She listens to parents and leaders as well.
She tries not to be wasteful and that you can tell.
She takes care of her world and gives back what it needs.
She shows others she cares through her words and her deeds.
Now you don't have to wonder who that Daisy can be.
You knew all along that Daisy is ME!

all text reprinted with permission from Who Is A Daisy Girl Scout?, copyright 1993, Girl Scouts of the United States of America

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE ON GIRL SCOUT PROMISE AND LAW

Questionnaire for Daisy Girl Scouts' Understanding of the Girl Scout Promise and Law

The following questions can be asked to find out girls' understanding of the Girl Scout Promise and Law. These questions can be answered orally and informally, or girls can draw a picture or tell a story. There are also activity pages in My Girl Scout Activity Scrapbook that can be substituted (see items with a * below) for questions about the Promise. The book, Who is a Daisy Girl Scout?, can be used to elicit responses concerning the Girl Scout Law.

The Girl Scout Promise

1. Tell me what it means to try.

2. How do you serve God?
   *p. 3, "This is how I try to serve God:"

3. What does it mean to serve your country?
   *p. 4, . . . And my country"

4. How do you help people?
   *p. 5, This is how I try to help people . . ."

The Girl Scout Law

1. Tell me what it means to be honest.

2. Tell me what being fair means.

3. Tell me ways you help where you are needed.

4. What does it mean to be cheerful?

5. How do you try to be friendly?

6. What does it mean to be a sister to every Girl Scout?

7. Tell me what it means to respect (listen to) adults.

8. What can you do to use resources wisely?

9. How do you take care of the environment?

10. What are some things that you do well? How can you let other people know you like them?

APPENDIX C

INTEREST SURVEY FORM

Interest Survey Form

The Daisy Girl Scouts from the North End Recreation Center have had a busy year full of activities. All girls who participated this year are eligible to become Brownie Girl Scouts next year. To help us plan, we want to make sure we know who will be participating. This form can be completed by girls with adult assistance.

I liked Daisy Girl Scouts.

Yes No I don't Know

What did you like best?

_____

_____

_____

I want to be a Brownie Girl Scout.

Yes No I don't know

What do you want to do as a Brownie Girl Scout?

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX D

WEEKLY REPORT FORM FOR MEETING ACTIVITIES

Review of Daisy Girl Scout Meeting Activities

The Guide for Daisy Girl Scout Leaders describes twelve tips for planning a meeting. The following checklist expands on those tips to help you review the consistency of meeting activities. Brief descriptions are sufficient for those items requiring explanation.

Date of meeting_____

1. Preparation
   materials were set up ahead of time____
   leaders and co-leaders discussed the flow ahead of time____
   day's activities were discussed with girls before the meeting____

2. Pre-meeting activity (hands-on activity for girls to do as they arrived)_____.

3. Connected with each girl____.

4. Used the five-and one-minute warnings for transitions____.

5. Established routines.
   discussed kaper chart before the meeting____
   other_____

6. Girls helped plan opening ceremonies____.
   Activity:_____

7. Sharing time.
   What issues needed to be resolved?_____
   _____

8. Involved girls in planning activities.
   kaper chart_____
   activity cards or other resources_____
   other_____

9. Used Daisy Girl Scout Circle (once a month)
   What ideas have girls had for this month? Note any changes that may occur.

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

10. Enjoyed an organized, relaxed snack time.
    Girls were involved in making and/or setting out snacks____.
    Snacks were simple and relaxed but didn't take too much time____.

11. Clean up is everyone's responsibility.
    Activities were cleaned up as they were completed____.
    Clean-up checkers helped make sure areas was clean____.

12. Closing ceremony.
    Briefly describe the ceremony._____
    _____
    _____
    Girls helped plan_____
    The day's activities and each girl's part were discussed before the end of the meeting____

List any issues or concerns you may have or any assistance that may be required for future meetings.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Name of person completing this form_____

Date of next meeting_____